



U.S. Department
of Transportation

Federal Aviation
Administration

ADVISORY CIRCULAR

**Subject: OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR
AIRPORT TRAFFIC CONTROL
TOWERS (ATCT) THAT ARE NOT
OPERATED BY, OR UNDER
CONTRACT WITH, THE UNITED
STATES (NON-FEDERAL).**

Date: 11/15/99

AC No: 90-93A

Initiated by: ATP-100

1. PURPOSE.

This advisory circular (AC) recommends publications, administrative and operational procedures that will assist in the management of a non-Federal ATCT (NFCT).

2. CANCELLATION.

AC 90-93, Operating Procedures for Airport Traffic Control Towers (ATCT) that are not Operated by, or Under Contract with, the United States (Non-Federal), dated July 19, 1993, is cancelled.

3. EFFECTIVE DATE: This AC is effective October 1, 1999.

4. REFERENCES.

The following references contain information applicable to NFCT operations.

- a. Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR), Parts 65, 91, 121, and 171.
- b. Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM).

5. EXPLANATION OF CHANGES.

This AC has been revised to include references for obtaining directives and publications. Also, a section containing Paperwork Reduction Act requirements has been added. Additionally, several editorial changes not affecting policy or procedures have been made for clarification.

6. PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT REQUIREMENTS.

The intent of the AC and this reporting and recordkeeping activity is to maintain a high level of air safety without regulating certain entities that

previously were not regulated. The FAA is requesting operators of NFCT to voluntarily comply with the regulations as stated in this AC, as well as to voluntarily submit information by using the listed forms as do FAA Air Traffic personnel. Collection of this information is voluntary, and the promise of confidentiality is not necessary. The reporting burden is estimated to be 3.5 hours annually per respondent, and the recordkeeping burden is estimated to be 33 hours annually per respondent. Note that an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number assigned to this reporting and recordkeeping burden is 2120-0572.

7. DEFINITIONS.

a. ADMINISTRATOR - The Federal Aviation Administrator or any person to whom the Administrator has delegated authority in the matter concerned.

b. NFCT - An ATCT operated by an entity other than the United States Government, excluding Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) contract ATCT, providing air traffic control (ATC) services to aircraft operating to, from, on, or in the vicinity of an airport where the NFCT is located.

c. AIR TRAFFIC MANAGER (ATM) - A person who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of an ATC facility.

d. DIRECTIVE - Any order, notice, change or supplement used by the FAA or ATM to specify policies, guidance, or procedures dealing with ATC operations, training, equipment, and management of an ATCT.

e. AIR TRAFFIC DIVISION MANAGER - A person who has the overall responsibility for the safe, orderly and expeditious flow of air traffic within the FAA geographic region or any person to whom that responsibility has been delegated.

f. AIRWAY FACILITIES DIVISION MANAGER -

A person who has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the region's airway facilities expansion and modernization program and maintenance of the National Airspace System (NAS) facilities within the FAA geographic region or any person to whom that responsibility has been delegated.

g. NFCT VENDOR - The commercial operator from whom ATC services are contracted.

8. BACKGROUND AND SCOPE.

a. In the interest of promoting aviation safety, the FAA through its AC's and other publications disseminates good operating practices, policy, guidelines, and procedures to assist in the management of services provided to users of the NAS. An example of these policy publications is the 14 CFR ~~that~~ specify minimum standards for proficiency, conduct, experience, skills, and ratings.

b. Specifically, Part 6.5 of 14 CFR details requirements for issuing certificates and associated rating and general operating rules for Airmen other than Flight crewmembers. Additionally; the ~~FAA~~ has internal directives detailing the methodology used by Federal facilities (FAA-contract **ATCTs**) and Department of Defense (DoD) facilities to establish and manage **ATCTs**, certify FAA employees as control tower operators, maintain controller proficiency, and determine the quality of services provided.

c. However, there are facilities that do not fall under the realm of the Federal Government. These private entities have contracts with state and local governments to provide ATC services. These **ATCTs** are called non-Federal **ATCTs**. No Federal statutes or regulations prescribe uniform or consistent procedures and criteria for the establishment and management of these **ATCTs**. The procedures recommended herein are designed for these NFCT owners, vendors, and **ATMs**.

d. ~~The~~ FAA believes that voluntary observance of the recommended, procedures detailed in this AC will improve the services and aid those **NFCT** owners, vendors, operators, and facility managers in maintaining the high level of safety enjoyed by Federally-operated ATC facilities in the NAS.

9. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NFCT ATM.

The FAA recommends that ~~the~~ NFCT ATM endeavor to fulfill the following responsibilities:

a. Maintain familiarity with the positions, equipment, and duties required to operate an **ATCT**.

b. Ensure operational continuity during the transfer of position responsibility.

c. Issue pertinent **airmen's/weather** information (i.e. **SIGMETs**, **NOTAMs**, etc.).

d. Maintain training records for each ATC specialist in the facility.

e. Ensure that ATC services are provided in a safe, orderly and efficient manner.

f. Ensure that each ATC specialist in the NFCT manager's employ is properly qualified and current in the application of ATC services.

g. Maintain an aggressive pilot education program that includes pilot/controller forums to discuss/clarify local procedures and airspace matters.

h. Ensure that voice recorders and other essential equipment are checked for suitable operation at the beginning of each shift.

i. Ensure that, excluding tapes containing information pertaining to accidents/incidents, voice recorder tapes are retained for a minimum of 15 days. Tapes pertinent to accidents and incidents should be retained as detailed in FAA Order 8020.11.

10. EMERGENCY OPERATIONS AND HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS.

a. To ensure that emergency operations (for example accidents/incidents) data are documented, it is essential for **NFCT ATMs** to record and report all accidents/incidents in the same manner as would FAA-operated **ATCTs** (in accordance with FAA Order 8020.11). The purpose of such reports and records is to provide essential information for follow-on investigations and help in the development of new procedures and regulations.

b. The NFCT ATM, or a designated representative, upon becoming aware of conditions that are hazardous to a safe operation should immediately notify airport management to restrict or suspend operations as necessary until the necessary corrections are made.

11. OPERATIONAL AND PROCEDURAL STANDARDS.

a. Using the FAA handbooks, manuals, and directives listed in this AC as a guide, the **NFCT** vendor/ATM should develop a series of directives on operations and procedures for the subject NFCT. The procedures should specify the following:

(1)Standard operational position procedures, position binders, and position relief briefings.

(2)Procedures for training and supervising air traffic controllers.

(3)Procedures for handling accidents/incidents.

(4) Procedures for records management.

(5) Procedures for providing responses to facility evaluations conducted by the **Office** of Air Traffic System Effectiveness.

(6) Procedures for the installation, maintenance, and repair of electronic and weather equipment.

b. The **NFCT** vendor/ATM should forward an information copy of the directives and procedures listed under this section, and any amendments, to the regional Air Traffic Division Manager.

c. The **NFCT** vendor/ATM should ensure that each employee complies with the operational standards and procedures, as well as any applicable 14 CFR, and provide all specialists with current operational standards.

d. Each **NFCT** vendor/ATM, before establishing or changing the, location of any business office, except a temporary change, should notify the regional Air Traffic Division Manager of the change in writing.

e. Each **NFCT** vendor/ATM should notify the regional Air Traffic Division Manager at least 24 hours before termination of any advertised ATC service.

f. The **NFCT** vendor/ATM should:

(1) Ensure that each supervisor is qualified and current and holds a Control Tower Operator (**CTO**) certificate issued under Part 65 of 14 CFR.

(2) Ensure that each employee directly involved in **ATCT** equipment maintenance has a minimum of a Federal Communications Commission certificate and can show to the Airway Facilities Division Manager the ability to install successfully, perform repair work or maintain, and verify operation of such equipment.

(3) Develop and manage a "substance abuse" program that meets the requirements of Parts 65 and 121 of 14 CFR.

g. The **NFCT Vendor/ATM** should maintain the following information on all facility personnel holding a **CTO** certificate:

(1) Each person's full name and the date of issuance of a **CTO** certificate for the facility and the certificate number.

(2) The amount and currency of experience in sufficient detail to determine the individual's qualifications.

(3) The individual's current duties and the date of the assignment to those duties.

(4) The effective date and class of medical certificate that the individual holds.

(5) The date of certification and required recurrent proficiency checks.

(6) Any action taken regarding any specialist's release or temporary suspension from employment for physical or professional disqualification.

(7) The date of the completion of any training associated with performing **CTO** duties.

12. FACILITY DIRECTIVES, REPORTS, AND FORMS.

a. Each ATM should make available to each employee the most current edition of the following directives or publications. Information on how to get these recommended FAA documents is available by writing for free copies of the "Advisory Circular Checklist" and the "Washington Headquarters Directives Checklist, FAA- WA 0000.5." Both documents may be ordered from: U.S. Department of Transportation, Subsequent Distribution Office, SVC- 121.23, Ardmore East Business Center, 3341Q **75th** Avenue, Landover, Maryland 20785, FAX (301) 386-5394 (They accept mail and FAX requests only). For Aeronautical Charts and Related Publications Price List, write to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Distribution Branch, **N/CG33**, National Ocean Service, 6501 Lafayette Avenue, Riverdale, Maryland **20737- 1199**, **FAX** (301) 436-6829. For information on obtaining Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, write to the Superintendent of Documents, **P.O.** Box 371954, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15250-7954.

(1) **FAA** Order 1320.1, FAA Directives System.

(2) **FAA** Order 1350.15, Records Organization, Transfer, and Destruction Standards.

(3) **FAA** Order 3120.4, Air Traffic Control Training.

(4) **FAA** Order 6700.20, Non-Federal Navigational Aids and Air Traffic Control Facilities

(5) **FAA** Order 7010.1, Air Traffic Evaluations.

(6) **FAA** Order 7110.65, Air **Traffic** Control Handbook

(7) **FAA** Order 7210.3, Facility Operation and Administration.

(8) **FAA** Order 7220.1, Certification and Rating Procedures.

(9) **FAA** Order 7340.1, Contractions.

(10) **FAA** Order 7350.6, Location Identifiers.

(11) **FAA** Order 7610.4, Special Military Operations

(12) **FAA** Order 7930.2, Notices to Airmen (**NOTAM**) Handbook

(13) **FAA** Order 8020.11, Aircraft Accident and Incident Notification, Investigation, and Reporting.

(14) **FAA** Order 8260.3, U.S. Standard for Terminal Procedures.

(15) Aeronautical Information Manual

(16) **Airport/Facility** Directory.

(17)Terminal Procedures Publications

(18)IFR Enroute Low/High Altitude charts.

(19)**Title** 14 Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 1, 65, 67, 71, 73, 91, 93, 99, 101, 103, 105, 171, 189; and Appendix I, Part 121.

(20)Sectional charts covering at least the area within a 50 mile radius of the ATCT.

(21)National Air Traffic Training- Program Terminal Refresher, VFR Tower, TR-1 thru TR- 14.

(22)Terminal Instructional Program Guide (IPG), TP12-0-1.

(23)Terminal Self-Study, Phase VI, 55026, Flight Data all units.

(24)Terminal Self-Study, Phase VII, 55027, Clearance Delivery all units.

(25)Terminal Self-Study, Phase VIII, 55028, Ground Control all units.

(26)Terminal Self-Study, Phase IX, 55029, Local Control all units.

(27)FAA Form 7210-2, Preliminary Operational Error/Deviation Report.

(28)FAA Form 7210-3, Final Operational Error/Deviation Report.

(29)FAA Form 7230-4, Daily Record of Facility Ops/Personnel Log.

(30)FAA Form 7230-7.2, Flight Strips-FDEP, or FAA Form 7230-8, Flight Strips single cut (if manually prepared).

(31)FAA Form 7230- 10, Position Log.

(32)FAA Form 8020-9, Aircraft Accident/Incident Preliminary Notice.

(33)FAA Form 8020-11, Incident Report.

(34)FAA Form 8020-17, Preliminary Pilot Deviation.

(35)FAA Form 8020- 19, Reclassification of Aviation Incident Report.

(36)FAA Form 8020-21, Preliminary Near Midair Collision Report.

(37)Appropriate National Weather Service publications.

(38)An operations manual and log for each piece of equipment required in the ATCT.

(39)Copies of all current Letters of Agreements.

(40)Copy of current airport **certification** manual or specifications.

(41)Copy of current FAA approved airport emergency plan.

13. FACILITY EQUIPMENT.

a. Each NFCT vendor should equip their respective ATCT with the following at the minimum:

(1)An operable two-way radio with a backup power source, consisting of a minimum of one transmitter and receiver for each frequency published.

(2)An operable backup two-way multi-channel transmitter and receiver with a reliable backup power source.

(3)A wind indicator system certified by either the FAA or the National Weather Service (NWS).

(4)At least two aneroid altimeter setting indicators (ASI), or one ASI and a traceable pressure standard, that takes weather observations and/or provides local airport advisories. When two or more facilities (or a NWS Commissioned/certified AWOS) are located on the same airport, the requirement may be reduced to one aneroid ASI per facility. Aircraft altimeters should not be used in reporting altimeters settings.

NOTE-

A digital ASI (DASI) system is considered as one aneroid ASI instrument

(5)Visibility charts, prepared and maintained by the ATM, in conjunction with the NWS, where an ATCT takes weather observations.

(6)A voice recorder system that, during the period the ATCT is in operation, continually records the synchronized time with the recording of each radio frequency and interphone line used for receiving/transmitting ATC clearances or instructions.

(7)A minimum of one signal light gun with a reliable back-up power source.

(8)Accurate facility drawings of the wiring and layout of the equipment.

(9)Two sets of 7 x 50 power binoculars.

(10)An airfield lighting control panel, if applicable.

(11)A telephone/interphone system to communicate with the parent Approach Control Facility/Air Route Traffic Control Center, and the primary emergency response organization for the airport.


b. Each NFCT vendor/ATM should advise, in writing, the regional Airway Facilities Division Manager/Air Traffic Division Manager of alterations to any equipment recommended in this AC.

c. Each NFCT vendor/ATM should ensure that radio frequencies supporting aviation services are applied for and managed according to the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47-Telecommunications, Part 87.

d. Each NFCT vendor/ATM should coordinate activities, where appropriate, with the airport management.

**14. MONITORING OF FACILITY APPLICATION OF
RECOMENDED PROCEDURES.**

The **NFCT's** application of the recommended procedures contained in this **AC** will be periodically reviewed by the **Office** of Air Traffic System Effectiveness according to procedures outlined in FAA Order 7010.1, to assist in voluntary compliance with the recommendations in the interest of promoting aviation safety.


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